

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SY-05 USSS-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00
PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 MCT-01 OMB-01 A-01
OPR-02 OC-06 CCO-00 DHA-05 ACDA-12 EB-08 SIL-01
LAB-04 ARA-10 FBO-02 /106 W
-----004215 031507Z /42

P 031405Z NOV 77
FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4051
USIA WASHDC PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY VIENNA PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRAGUE 3185
USIA FOR IEU: BELGRADE FOR CSCE-FROWICK; VIENNA FOR RPO

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PROP, SCUL, CZ
SUBJECT: EMBASSY RESIDENCE MASARYK EXHIBIT IS DEFACED BY "VANDALS"

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. SHORTLY AFTER 8:00 A.M. NOVEMBER 1, AMBASSADOR NOTICED THAT WINDOW EXHIBIT AT RESIDENCE ON THOMAS MASARYK AND U.S. ROLE IN CZECHOSLOVAK INDEPENDENCE IN 1918 HAD BEEN TOTALLY PAINTED RED. PASTED ON IT WERE TWO POSTERS, APPARENTLY PROFESSIONALLY PREPARED, WITH

CAPTIONS "SOLVE YOUR OWN PROBLEMS" AND "TELL US ABOUT...RACISM, NEUTRON BOMB, UNEMPLOYMENT, APARTHEID, VIOLENCE, CHILE," WITH PICTURES NEATLY CUT FROM RECENT CZECHOSLOVAK MAGAZINES AND BLOTCHES OF RED PAINT ADDED. THE HAND-LETTERED POSTERS HAD BEEN TORN FROM THE EXHIBIT, AND WERE FOUND NEAR IT. AMBASSADOR HAD NOTICED INCREASING

NUMBERS OF PEOPLE LOOKING AT EXHIBIT OVER WEEKEND, AND ALSO POLICE AT RESIDENCE STANDING NEAR IT, RATHER THAN IN VICINITY OF BUILDING
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ENTRANCE AS USUAL. PLAINCLOTHES MAN WAS NOTED COPYING THE CAPTIONS WORD FOR WORD.

2. ADCM DELIVERED NOTE PROTESTING VANDALISM TO MFA SIXTH DEPARTMENT HEAD ZANTOVSKY NOVEMBER 3, AND ALSO GAVE HIM PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE SMEARED EXHIBIT AND POSTERS. ZANTOVSKY EXPRESSED REGRET AND SAID MFA WOULD INVESTIGATE.

3. SOMEWHAT LARGER VERSION OF RESIDENCE EXHIBIT IS PLACED IN DISPLAY BOXES OUTSIDE OF EMBASSY, AND IN EMBASSY ENTRANCE. EXHIBIT IS BASED LARGELY ON HISTORICAL PHOTOS SELECTED BY IPS AND PRODUCED BY RPO-VIENNA. TITLED "1918: THE UNITED STATES AND THE RISE OF INDEPENDENT CZECHOSLOVAKIA," IT CONTAINS PICTURES OF MASARYK, EDWARD BENES, WOODROW WILSON, WILSON ADDRESSING CONGRESS, ETC. TEXT IS A BRIEF HISTORICAL COMMENTARY WHICH ALL BUT THE MOST IDEOLOGICALLY ORIENTED PERSON WOULD FIND SIMPLE, ACCURATE AND OBJECTIVE. COUNTRY TEAM REVIEWED THE ENTIRE EXHIBIT BEFORE IT WAS PLACED IN OUR WINDOWS IN OCTOBER. ANTICIPATE ROUTINE CHANGE OF EXHIBIT IN ANOTHER TWO WEEKS.

4. REACTION TO THE DISPLAY BY CZECHOSLOVAK PASSERS-BY HAS BEEN OF INTEREST, BUT NOT UNDULY SO, ALTHOUGH ONE WOMAN PLACED A BOUQUET OF FLOWERS BEFORE MASARYK-IN-U.S. PICTURE.

END UNCLASSIFIED.

5. BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL COMMENT: THIS IS THE FIRST TIME AN EFFORT HAS BEEN MADE TO DEFACE ONE OF OUR EXHIBITS HERE, ALTHOUGH THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR IS SPECIALIZED IN SUCH ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING DISRUPTING FUNERALS BY GUNNING MOTORCYCLES OUTSIDE THE GRAVEYARD, DISINTERING THE GRAVES OF POLITICAL OPPONENTS, ARRESTING PARTICIPANTS AT NON-SANCTIONED GATHERINGS, AND OTHER RELATED SKILLS.
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6. WE BELIEVE THE EXHIBIT WAS WELL WORTH DOING, AND OBVIOUSLY SCORED, HENCE THE RESPONSE OF THE LOCAL PAINT SQUAD.

7. MIXING A TOPICAL POLITICAL OR HISTORICAL EXHIBIT IN WITH OTHERS OF A MORE "BEAUTIFUL AMERICA" CHARACTER HELPS GET OUR POLITICAL MESSAGE ACROSS IN ONE OF THE FEW WAYS OPEN TO US IN CLOSED SOCIETIES SUCH AS CZECHOSLOVAKIA. RPO'S EARLIER EXHIBIT ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE U.S. IS ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF SUCH AN EXHIBIT; WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING TREATMENT OF FORTHCOMING "UNEMPLOYMENT IN U.S."

WINDOW EXHIBIT WHEN IT IS READY.
END CONFIDENTIAL

8. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED: SENDING PICTURES VIA AIR FOR IEU AND RPO.
BYRNE

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CULTURAL PROPERTY, EXHIBITS, VANDALISM
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 03-Nov-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977PRAGUE03185
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770405-0486
Format: TEL
From: PRAGUE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t197711100/aaaadhog.tel
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Original Previous Classification: n/a
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Review Exemptions: n/a
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TAGS: PGOV, PROP, SCUL, CZ
To: STATE USIA
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vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/6e54ae0d-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
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